

PAUL URGES RUMSFELD TO BRING BIN LADEN TO JUSTICE

Washington, DC: Congressman Ron Paul recently wrote Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, urging the administration to consider a new approach that would hasten the capture of those responsible for the horrific September 11th terrorist attacks.

"We seem to have forgotten that our primary objective in the war on terror is to find, capture, or kill Osama bin Laden and others responsible for the September 11th attacks," Paul stated. "Our troops in Afghanistan are becoming increasingly frustrated over the lack of progress in locating bin Laden. We need to provide President Bush with every available tool to bring these criminals to justice."

Paul introduced innovative legislation shortly after September 11th based on the constitutional concept of letters of marque and reprisal. Paul's HR 3076, the "Marque and Reprisal Act of 2001," authorizes the President to use private parties to track down international terrorists wherever they hide.

"The drafters of the Constitution provided an efficient means of combating attacks on American soil and citizens by groups not formally affiliated with a government: letters of marque and reprisal," Paul stated. "Conventional armed forces are ill-suited to tracking down international terrorists. By contrast, letters of marque and reprisal are especially suited to our modern campaign against terrorism, which is fought against individuals rather than governments."

Marque and reprisal would work in conjunction with our conventional military efforts, creating an incentive for individuals close to bin Laden to kill or capture him and his associates. This method in effect places a bounty on the heads of international terrorists, who often travel between countries, melt into civilian populations, or hide in remote areas. The goal is to avail ourselves of the knowledge and expertise of private parties, especially given the lack of western intelligence in many of the countries likely to harbor bin Laden.

"Ultimately, letters of marque and reprisal could help us avoid a wider war by bringing terrorists to justice without the need for military action," Paul concluded. "President Bush promised to use every possible resource to win the war on terror, and I hope Secretary Rumsfeld considers letters of marque and reprisal to bring the September 11th criminals to justice."